

Message Text

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ACTION COA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SCI-06 IO-13 L-03 CEQ-02 EPA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1741

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 3330

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SGEN, TB 10, XM, XG, XE, XD, XA

SUBJECT: MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT OF 1972 (MMPA):

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON STATUS OF MARINE MAMMALS

REF: A) STATE 114904 B) HAGUE 3272

1. OWING TO RANGE OF MOVEMENT OF WHALES, DOLPHINS AND PORPOISES, THERE ARE SAID TO BE NO RELIABLE ESTIMATES OF POPULATION IN DUTCH WATERS, THE NORTH SEA OR LARGER AREAS. CAPTURE IN DUTCH TERRITORY OCCURS ONLY WHEN ANIMAL IS OCCASIONALLY WASHED ASHORE, USUALLY IN POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION AND SELDOM SURVIVING. CAPTURE BY FISHERMEN SOMETIMES OCCURS ACCIDENTALLY IN TROLLING NETS. IN THIS CASE, ACCORDING TO INFORMANT, IT IS BELIEVED ANIMAL IS USUALLY RELEASED, BUT UTILIZATION MAY OCCUR. THERE IS NO CONTROL OR AVAILABLE STATISTICS RE THIS ACTIVITY. POPULATION HAS DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE WORLD WAR II, PARTICULARLY IN LAST 10 TO 15 YEARS. REASONS SUGGESTED ARE OVER-FISHING, POLLUTION, AND POSSIBLY GROWING SHIPPING ACTIVITY. UNTIL ABOUT 1964 SPECIMENS WERE ACCIDENTALLY NETTED AN AVERAGE OF 2 OR 3 TIMES A MONTH. SINCE THEN THIS HAS REPORTEDLY DECREASED TO VERY FEW TIMES A YEAR.

2. WHALES BELIEVED CURRENTLY TO BE OF NEGLIGIBLE QUANTITY IN
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NORTH SEA. CLOSEST AREA WITH SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER SAID TO BE OFF

WEST COAST IRELAND.

3. DOLPHINS SELDOM FOUND THESE DAYS IN NEAR AREAS OF NORTH SEA BUT ARE OBSERVED IN OPEN SEA NORTH OF BRITISH ISLES. INFORMANT STATES THAT LEGISLATION IS PENDING IN NETHERLANDS PARLIAMENT FOR PROTECTION OF MARINE MAMMALS. IMPORTANT CAUSE IS SUSPICION THAT COMMON AND BOTTLE-NOSE DOLPHINS ARE USED FOR PET FOOD.

4. PORPOISES USED TO BE OBSERVED FREQUENTLY UP TO 15 YEARS AGO BUT HAVE APPARENTLY MIGRATED SOUTH. NEVERTHELESS ACCIDENTAL NETTING OF COMMON PORPOISE IS SAID TO OCCUR 4 OR 5 TIMES A YEAR, A SLIGHT INCREASE NOT SHARED OTHER MAMMALS.
TANGUY

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